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THE REALISM OF STANLEY HOUGHTON

BY

DOROTHY HUNTINGTON HILL

THESIS

FOR THE

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

IN

ENGLISH

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1922

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May 24 1922

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DEGREE OF Bachelor of Arts

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

Stanley Houghton's life centers in two things: what may be called his vehement love of the theatre, and his less interested pursuit of things material. In this respect the life of this young modern is reminiscent of that of Charles Lamb. Houghton, like Lamb, spent his days as a clerk in a warehouse and his evenings in literary effort. Then, too, another parallel between them is that they both possess that marvellous gift of the high gods, a keen sense of humor and the technique necessary to present their material to the public.

William Stanley Houghton was born at Ashton-upon-Mersey, in Cheshire, on February 22, 1881. The Houghton family of today descends from an old Lancashire family which originally settled at Preston. The name, first spelled Hoghton, became, about 1722, Houghton. It is pronounced as though it were spelled Hawton. The dramatist's father, a cotton manufacturer of Manchester, educated his son at the Grammar School of that city. At the close of 1897, when he was nearly sixteen, he entered his father's office. Although he worked his way up from junior office-boy to salesman, he worked unwillingly. He was always striving to write.

His first, as well as his last efforts, were toward the theatre. An excellent amateur actor, he absorbed the

atmosphere of grease-paint. At the age of twenty (1901) he wrote little comic operas and farces which he helped to stage. In that same year he attempted some extremely melodramatic one-act plays, After Naseby, The Last Shot, and The Blue Phial. There is mention of a play written in 1902-1903, but it seems to have disappeared over the horizon of oblivion, dragging its title with it. From 1903 to 1907 he wrote at least one short play each year. None of these are worthy of consideration except The Old Testament and the New (1905) which receives some attention in this treatment.¹

In 1908, Miss A. E. F. Horniman acquired the Gaiety Theatre of Manchester. Miss Horniman's production of plays created a new standard in provincial England and furnished Stanley Houghton with his opportunity. November of 1908 saw the first production of The Dear Departed at the Gaiety. This was followed by Independent Means, in August of 1909, a play chiefly interesting because of the last act in which Houghton's technique masters him. In April of 1909 Marriages in the Making was finished, but this play has never been produced.

In November and December of 1910 Miss Horniman's company at the Gaiety produced The Younger Generation. This play, after Hindle Wakes, is the dramatist's most successful play. It has been produced in London at the Haymarket and

1. See Chapter III.

Duke of York's theatres. It has seen American production by Charles Frohman. This play won the favor of William Archer. It must be remembered that Houghton was at this time still spending the so-called working hours of the day "under the strain of a constantly growing feeling that the selling of 'grey cloth' was something foreign from his true province."¹ The Master of the House, a play with a strong Irish flavor of the gruesome, was written after The Younger Generation, in 1909, but preceded it in production in September, 1910. Ginger, a play not in the Brighouse edition of Mr. Houghton's works, was written in 1910 but not produced until 1913 by Mr. Esmé Percy.

The Fifth Commandment was written by Mr. Houghton in 1911. It has never been produced in England and only once in America, at the Little Theatre, Chicago, in 1913. Fancy Free, also written in 1911, made its appearance in November of that year at a Manchester theatre. It failed. It has had an American production at the Princess Theatre, New York. Partners, the longer version of Fancy Free, was written in the interval from May to September of 1911. It has never been produced.

Mr. Houghton's health was never very good, and the tremendous success of Hindle Wakes, written from October to December of 1911 and produced by Miss Horniman's repertory

1. Houghton, Stanley: Works, v. 1, Introduction, p. xi.

company at the Coronet Theatre in June, 1912, seems to have been too much for him. After its Manchester success the play had a long run in London. Mr. Houghton felt so reassured by the success of this play that he gave up his position in his father's office and attempted the literary field in earnest. The peculiar thing about the dramatist's work from 1912 on, is that it declines with his withdrawal from the cotton trade. We wonder if the change of habit was too much for him.

There are three plays written on commission in the period from September to December of 1912. These are Phipps, Pearls, and Trust the People, the only one of the group appearing in the Brighouse edition being Phipps. Phipps and Pearls were both put on by Mr. Bouchier in 1912. The latter is a regular music-hall piece. Trust the People ran for forty-four nights, from February 6, 1913, on.

After the success of Hindle Wakes the young dramatist took a flat in Charing Cross Road, London. He found steady work impossible, the public was much too busy making him a literary lion. His health was growing steadily worse, as the result of some obscure poisoning. May of 1913 found him enjoying Paris and planning a novel called Life. In June the rehearsals of The Perfect Cure called him back to Manchester. There he was ill but went on to Venice. After a fortnight he was operated on. He seemed to be getting better, and his parents took him home to Manchester. He died on the 11th of

December, 1913.

The plays which have been bequeathed to us are listed below, together with the dates of first production, when produced.

1. The Old Testament and the New: (written in 1905).
2. The Dear Departed: (written in 1908), produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, November 2, 1908.
3. Marriages in the Making: (written in April, 1909).
4. Independent Means: (written in 1908), produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, August 30, 1909.
5. The Master of the House: (written in 1909), produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, September 26, 1910.
6. The Younger Generation: (written in 1909), produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, November 21, 1910.
7. The Fifth Commandment: (written in 1911), produced at the Little Theatre, Chicago, April 1913.
8. Fancy Free: (written in 1911), produced at the Gaiety Theatre, Manchester, November 6, 1911.
9. Partners: (written in May 1911).
10. Hindle Wakes: (written in October 1911), produced at the Adlwyck Theatre, London, June 16, 1912.
11. Phipps: (written 1912), produced at the Garrick Theatre, London, November 19, 1912.
12. The Perfect Cure: (written 1912), produced at the Apollo Theatre, London, June 17, 1913.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Any student of the modern drama who attempts the accurate analysis of such a dramatist as Stanley Houghton, without some knowledge of dramatic realism and its history in the last half of the 19th Century, is seriously handicapped. Rarely, however, do the creators of realistic drama write down their theories of it for us. The dramatist creates his version of realism and leaves it to the critic to write the theory of it. Mr. Houghton is not an exception to this rule. I have, therefore, in this first chapter made use of William Leonard Courtney's theory of modern realism. His theory, or "inquiry into the conditions and limitations of Dramatic Realism,"¹ is to be found in his essay on the "Realistic Drama" in Old Saws and Modern Instances. After discussing briefly the meaning of true dramatic realism, I shall follow with a more detailed summary of realism in England from the time of Tom Robertson to such serious and successful realists as St. John Ervine, John Galsworthy, and Stanley Houghton.

The dramatist of realism must be something of a

1. Courtney, William L: Old Saws and Modern Instances, preface

scientist, a kind of "super-scientist". He observes the life which goes on around him and carefully tabulates his observations in a dramatic form. He considers it to be his business as an artist to paint men as he thinks they are, "not very good, not very bad, average creatures, sometimes with good intentions, often with bad performance, meaning well and doing ill,--above all, never heroes and never heroines, nor even thorough-going villains, but (as one might phrase it) of a piebald variety."¹ But that is not all, the realist must possess a passionate desire for truth--truth at all costs. "He must possess an equally passionate hatred of all hypocrisy and sham, his zeal must anchor him on solid facts. He must refuse to care whether he gives pain or discomfort to men and women who would rather live in a fool's paradise."² As Mr. Clayton Hamilton says in his article on the "New Realism in the Drama", "Character is all they (the realists) care about; and provided their imaginary people are representative and real, they do not deem it indispensable that they shall reveal themselves in terms of action. They therefore exercise their artistry in an effort to conceal the fact that the drama is different from nature."³ In brief,

1. Ibid., p. 161.

2. Ibid., p. 183.

3. Bookman, v. 36, p. 639.

the art of true realism consists in the mirror-like representation of character. The mirror of the drama can never be flawless, but it must be as "true" to the image reflected as possible.

This theory of realism has taken many years to formulate. Undoubtedly the "spirit of science" which so disturbed 19th Century thought is indirectly responsible for realism. It was not, however, until the last quarter of the century that anything worth while in the field of realism was accomplished. Previously the melodrama, farce and burlesque ran riot. The drama was full of characters not unlike the Mikado of Gilbert and Sullivan fame. There was another form of dramatic expression in such plays as those of Tom Robertson. Until his time the English stage of the 19th Century was more or less under the domination of the French stage. This domination is evident in the plays directly preceding Robertson, in their obvious adaptation of French plot and characterization. Robertson's plays, it is true, are undeniably cheap, but they represent the dramatist's attempt at the realistic presentation of English manners and habits.¹ Hence his Society is one of the first notes in the steadily ascending scale of realism.

Some twenty years after Robertson, we find in the

1. Courtney, W. L.: Old Saws and Modern Instances, p. 176.

history of English realistic drama, two names which have come to mean much to us, in that they are associated with the earlier days of this movement. These are Henry Arthur Jones and Arthur Wing Pinero. Neither one of these men is, in the strict sense of the term, a realist, but they are contributors to the cause.

In Saints and Sinners (1884) Jones struck an important blow for realism. Here Jones shows the spirit of the realist who wishes to attack hypocrisy--in this instance that of narrow evangelicalism. Furthermore, although Michael and His Lost Angel is not a realistic drama, it contains an assault upon English self-satisfaction embodied in the character of the Rev. Michael Feversham. The production of The Profligate by Pinero in 1889 was a noteworthy event in the history of dramatic realism. In Pinero's work we see his two-fold desire, to paint his characters from life and to expose all that is rotten in the social state. The Profligate embodies Pinero's sincere if halting attempt to break down the walls of convention and expose the social problem behind them. In The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, written later, the dramatist has improved upon The Profligate. Here we find a more carefully worked out theme as well as a wonderfully realistic character in Paula Tanqueray. The last act of The Second Mrs. Tanqueray lifts us above the commonplace, it inspires us to pity. As Mr. Courtney says, "the supreme virtue of a drama of realism is that now and again it has this

strange power of transporting us out of ourselves. Everyone, perhaps, will have his own instances to give of an experience of this kind; for myself I felt it when I first saw The Second Mrs. Tanqueray, and again when I saw Hindle Wakes."¹

There have been other influences upon the development of realism in England. St. John Hankin, whose Constant Lover is an example of his dramatic theory, said, "it is the dramatist's business to represent life, not to argue about it." Mr. Galsworthy has contributed such pieces of the realistic drama as Justice and Strife. St. John Ervine's Magnanimous Lover, like many of his other plays, is realistic in nature. Mr. Granville Barker presents many serious problems to his audiences, notably that in Waste. In this play, Mr. Barker proves that any subject, even a repellent one, may be of interest to the realist, if it concerns the problems of society.

As for George Bernard Shaw, he is like the poor, always with us. His writings have been a sort of stimulus to the dramatists of the world for the past quarter of a century. His influence has spread like the ripples on a pool after one has thrown a stone in its midst. Furthermore, his continued insistence upon "the new", has kept the public constantly upon the alert.

The realism of Mr. Stanley Houghton is the outgrowth

1. Ibid., p. 188.

of these various influences. It is never pessimistic, for he chose to keep his dramas within the limits of the comic. Some of Houghton's critics have declared his plays to be nothing more than comedies of manners. It is the object of this treatment to prove by a more or less detailed study, that Mr. Houghton had the makings of a great realist and that only his early death prevented him from receiving his crown of laurels.

CHAPTER II.

MR. HOUGHTON'S REALISM IN THE LONGER PLAYS EXCLUSIVE
OF HINDLE WAKES.

If the realism of this period is, as we have seen, dependent upon the treatment of character, Stanley Houghton's work may be said to be one of the high points in its action. It is customary in a criticism of this nature, to judge a man by his greatest work, therefore Hindle Wakes has been used in this case as the "touchstone" for Mr. Houghton's work. Hence the traces of "base metal" found in the other dramas appear more striking by contrast.

So much for the criterion by which we shall judge Mr. Houghton's work, which falls into three natural divisions, the longer plays exclusive of Hindle Wakes, the one-act plays and non-dramatic writing, and Hindle Wakes. The arrangement of chapters in this criticism follows these divisions. The plays criticised in this chapter are arranged according to their chronological order. They include Independent Means, Marriages in the Making, The Younger Generation, Partners, and The Perfect Cure.

The first long play of any definite value was written by Mr. Houghton in 1908; it is a comedy in four acts entitled

Independent Means. As the title indicates, the play concerns itself with a married woman's right to earn her own living. The first act introduces the two main themes. The Edgar Forsyths return to the Forsyth home after a brief honeymoon which has been clouded by certain differences of opinion. Furthermore, the Forsyth fortune receives a distinct blow through the failure of a certain Dutch produce company; but with characteristic pride Edgar's father does not inform his family of this disaster. Act II. finds that the differences of opinion between Edgar and his wife Sidney have grown into a definite quarrel over Sidney's "rights". Mrs. Forsyth tells Edgar and Sidney of her husband's financial failure. The Forsyth credit has been discounted, so that the third act finds the house sold to John Ritchie, the family friend, and the furniture ticketed for auction. Sidney, insistent in her demands for "independent means", leaves the house without giving her future address to her husband. Forsyth, overcome by his sense of failure, and by the effect of too much "neat" whiskey on a bad heart, dies. In Act. IV. the Forsyth fortune has entirely disappeared; as a result Edgar accepts Ritchie's offer of a position. Sidney is acting as Ritchie's secretary, and these two young people have to share the same office. Their problems of readjustment are solved in the "usual" manner. Sidney, faced with the problem of making a living in the child-bearing period, capitulates, and the curtain falls upon their reconciliation.

This theme, however, is merely the background for Houghton's realistic characterization. Edgar Forsyth's stubborn egoism is carefully presented through such details as his quarrel in Act II. with Sidney over her place on the Suffrage Committee. We are convinced that he is just the sort of man who would forbid his wife's seeing Man and Superman because "it's not fit for a decent woman to see." The character of Jane, the housekeeper, remains the same even after her legacy allows her to give up her position in the Forsyth household. She comes to call on the Forsyths and ends by preparing tea. The following dialogue is but one instance of Houghton's fidelity to the homely details of life and character.

Mrs. Forsyth. We are just going to have a cup of tea before leaving. You'll stop for that, won't you?

Jane, (politely). I'm much obliged to you.

Sidney. I'll go and make it.

Mrs. Forsyth. The kettle is on the small gas stove.

Jane. They haven't cut off the gas, then?

Sidney. Not yet. (She goes to the door.)

Jane. I'd better come and help you. That little gas stove always fires back when you light it.

Sidney. Yes, Jane, come along; there's a dear.

(Sidney goes out.)

Mrs. Forsyth. Oh no, there's no need.

Jane. I'm not too proud; I often feel the want of something to do nowadays.¹

Another example of Houghton's fondness for realistic detail is to be found in the scene between Sidney and Edgar about the trunks in the first act.

(Certain bouncing sounds are heard, and Edgar suddenly flings open the door and bounds in. He is in his shirt-sleeves.)

Edgar. I say, Sid, the luggage has come, and one of your trunks--(Seeing Ritchie) Hello, Ritchie, old chap, how d'ye do.

Ritchie. Let's have a look at you. Ay, you'll do too.

Edgar. I should think so. Apologize for my shirt-sleeves; didn't know you were here.

Sidney. Edgar, what about my trunk?

Edgar. Yes, I forgot. One of your trunks has fallen off the car and the lid's burst open.

Sidney. Oh, which one? Has anything got spoilt?

Edgar. You'd better go and see. It looks to me rather a holy mess.

Sidney. Good gracious! (She runs out.)²

1. Houghton, Stanley: Works, v. 1, p. 57.

2. Ibid., pp. 28-29.

There are only two lapses from Houghton's realism in this play. The first of these is found in Sidney's insistence upon Ritchie's reducing her wages. The playwright makes rather too much of the incident. In the earlier part of the last act Edgar discovers that Sidney is making more money than he is. Now when Sidney is informed of the matter she demands a reduction in wages. It may be Sidney, but it isn't life. No employee ever demanded that his employer lop five pounds off his wages! Another defect in the last act is Houghton's almost farcical use of doors. The characters bob in and out and lock and unlock them. In fact, there is far too much bustling about for anything but a conventional French farce.

After a more or less detailed criticism of this play one is led to the conclusion that it is merely mediocre. The fault lies in the treatment. Having set forth certain serious problems, even introducing the tragic in Mr. Forsyth's death at the end of Act III., the dramatist fails to solve them. The whole last act is below the level of the first three. Mr. Houghton's forced solution of the Sidney-Edgar difficulty is unworthy of him. It is so conventional that we have a feeling that their affairs are merely cemented together until after the arrival of their child. Neither one of them has changed to any appreciable extent. The dramatist has only "patched" up the affair; this is only a temporary lull in their marital warfare. If Mr. Houghton found himself defeated in solving the



problem of the young Forsyths, why did he not end the play as Mr. Barker does the Madras House? There, at least, the fall of the curtain carries with it the conviction of life. Therefore, in failing to solve the realistic problem presented in the earlier part of the play, Act. IV. undermines the realistic force of the whole play.

Marriages in the Making was the next important play after Independent Means. In Act I., Mrs. Cartwright's carefully arranged marriage for her daughter, Dolly, with the eligible Clarence Amore, is threatened by the return of Dolly's former lover, Gordon Leigh. Act II. reveals the fact that Mrs. Cartwright had exacted a promise from Gordon not to write to Dolly during his service in India. Unable to see Dolly, Gordon leaves the Cartwright house. The Rector and his daughter Violet Fenny drop in to chat. Dolly is unsuccessful in her attempt to break her engagement to Clarence Amore. Clarence convinces himself that Violet is still in love with him. Later, Dolly and Violet talk matters over, and the scene ends with Dolly's writing a letter to Gordon at Violet's dictation. Mrs. Cartwright returns too late to intercept the letter. The third and last act occurs the same afternoon. The village gossip, Mrs. Scattergood, conveniently sees and hears things not meant for her, whereupon she relates the whole story. As a result Clarence's pride makes him try to hold Dolly to her promise, but Gordon's

arrival convinces him that it is impossible. Clarence leaves, to return at the end of the act with a carefully worked up lie, and the announcement of his engagement to Violet.

The theme is perfectly usual and scarcely bears comment. Mr. Houghton's overworking of the long arm of coincidence seems unnecessary. The chances are that in real life Gordon Leigh would have returned after Dolly's wedding. It was another fortunate coincidence that Violet Fenny still loved Clarence. In fact, the whole play is a succession of theatrical incidents, rather than life itself. As usual, in the realm of character Houghton's realism is perfect. The character of Clarence Amore impresses one with its truth. We are constantly reminded of George Meredith's The Egoist. But it is in the scenes between the women of the play that the comedy deserves to live. The dramatist's characterization in the scenes between Dolly and Mrs. Cartwright, and between Dolly and Violet, discloses an almost incredible knowledge of the subject. Mrs. Cartwright's role of unscrupulous woman is sustained from the opening of the first act to her last speech in Act III., "I'm a bit of a liar myself." I shall quote briefly from the scenes previously mentioned. The first is between Dolly and Mrs. Cartwright in Act. I. Dolly's mother has been somewhat shocked at her daughter's lack of interest in the man to whom she is engaged.

(Mrs. Cartwright settles herself to her novel, and there is a slight pause.)

Dolly (at length). Mother, were you ever in love with father?

Mrs. Cartwright (scandalized). Dolly, what a question to ask!

Dolly. Well, but were you?

Mrs. Cartwright. Of course. Didn't I marry him?

Dolly. Yes. But did you decide to marry him because you were in love with him, or decide you were in love with him because you were going to marry him?

Mrs. Cartwright (nonplussed). Really, Dolly--how can you expect me to remember a thing like that after all these years?¹

The second instance of Houghton's remarkable characterization of women occurs in Act II. Violet is urging Dolly to write Gordon Leigh, so that she, Violet, may marry Clarence Amore. As a bit of real life, it is excellent.

Dolly (handing her the letter). How will that do?

(Dolly addresses the envelope.)

Violet (having glanced through it). That's all right.

Dolly. I ask him to come and see me at once, you notice.

Violet. There wasn't any need to do that.

1. Ibid., p. 105.

(Dolly puts the letter in the envelope and seals it.)

Dolly. This must be delivered at once. I don't like to send one of the maids; mother might see it.

Violet. I'll take it for you. I can cycle round by the Leighs' on my way home.

Dolly. It's awfully good of you.

Violet. Not at all. (She takes the letter.) Do I look as if I'd been crying?

Dolly. It doesn't show much.

Violet. Is there a mirror? Oh yes!

(Placing letter on the mantel piece she rubs her cheeks.)¹

Independent Means and Marriages in the Making were followed by a more serious three-act play written in 1909, The Younger Generation. At the rise of the curtain on Act I., we discover Mr. and Mrs. James Kennion awaiting the arrival of their rebellious children. When they do come in, each one of them is forced to give a detailed account of the way in which he has spent the afternoon. Reggie, the youngest, is on the point of flight, because his father is too harsh with him. Grace is about to elope with Clifford Rawson because her parents will not allow her to see him at home. A letter from Rawson is intercepted by Grace's father, and she agrees to allow him to

1. Ibid., p. 154.

question the young man about his habits. Tom, James' brother, arrives from Hamburg, where he is in business. A committee of three men invite James Kennion to stand for Councillor on the Liberal ticket. In the presence of the assembled family they inform James Kennion that it is his duty, because he is respected by the community as a churchman and father. At the crucial moment of Kennion's acceptance, Arthur, the eldest son, comes in. There is the sound of scuffling as Arthur tries to kiss Maggie, the housemaid, who helps him into the room. He is in a state of gentlemanly intoxication and "the curtain falls in a complete silence of horror," according to the stage directions. The next morning (Act II.), finds Mr. Kennion insisting upon Maggie's acceptance of Arthur's apology. Maggie "gives notice" rather than be humiliated by a public apology. Kennion insults Reggie by forcing him to give a detailed account of his allowance. Grace sullenly says that Clifford Rawson will come over to report to her parents that afternoon. Arthur's settlement with his father is postponed until afternoon. Madame Kennion, or Mrs. Hannah Kennion, the irascible mother of Tom and James, comes in to insist intolerably upon everyone's turning out for church. Her son Tom has partially promised Arthur to rebel with him, but goes with the rest of the family rather than argue with Mrs. Hannah. Arthur strikes his second blow for freedom and remains seated before the fire while everyone

goes off to church without him. Act III. opens with a conference between the rebellious children. Kennion comes into the room and dismisses everyone but Arthur. Arthur says that he has made his apology to Maggie while the others were at church. Clifford Rawson comes in and succeeds in getting Kennion's approval only after Tom interferes in his behalf. Further, Tom threatens to tell everyone of one of his brother James' escapades in their youth, unless Arthur is allowed to return to the continent with him. The committee from the Liberal party urge James Kennion to stand as candidate. Reggie is left to solve his own problem. Mrs. Hannah considers her son James altogether too kind to his children and flings out of the house in disgust. The curtain falls upon Mr. and Mrs. James Kennion discussing their children in much the same fashion as at the rising of it on Act I.

The play moves smoothly and carefully by the simplest of narrative means. The characters, like most of those of Mr. Houghton's creation, are revealed through dialogue, and consequently there is very little plot. There are many amusing bits of realistic conversation, but perhaps that between Kennion and Maggie over the apology may be said to be typical.

Maggie. I'd much rather you'd let it rest.

Mr. Kennion. Not on any account. It's a matter of principle with me. Mr. Arthur has got to apologize to you before everybody.

Maggie. I couldn't listen to him, sir.

Mr. Kennion. But I shall insist on your listening.

Maggie (on verge of tears). Oh, sir. Don't humiliate me before everybody.

Mr. Kennion. Don't argue with me about it, Maggie. I am your master, and you will have to do what I tell you.

Maggie. I'd rather leave first, sir.

Mr. Kennion. Don't talk nonsense.

Maggie. I don't mind being kissed by anyone, even by you, sir; but when it comes to being apologized to before everybody, just as if I'd done something wrong--

Mr. Kennion (throwing himself back in his chair angrily.)
Tchah!¹

The daring arrangement of the setting of Act I., with the blank side of the stage picture representing the fireside wall of the dining-room, yields an undeniable feeling of intimacy. There is, too, a beautiful balance between the first scene of Act. I., with the Kennions awaiting the arrival of their children, and the last scene of Act III., where the curtain falls upon a similar scene in which their problem is still the same. The technique of this play is much better than that

1. Ibid., p. 217.

of Marriages in the Making. In fact, it is as clever technically as Hindle Wakes.

The theme of The Younger Generation is undeniably that of intolerance. Not that its presentation is by way of propaganda. But the play is full of intolerance from James Kennion's speech, "I don't know what the younger generation is coming to,"¹ to Mrs. Hannah's spiteful remark to her daughter-in-law, "You're not of my generation, Alice. You're of a younger and softer generation."² None of the persons of this self-satisfied group, except Tom, are capable of grasping the other's point of view. The theme is not a new one, neither is the introduction of Tom Kennion as the exception to this provincial attitude. But whereas an older and "softer generation" of dramatists would have managed to reconcile everyone at the end, Mr. Houghton shows us that these antagonisms remain. It is for this reason that the problem of Reggie remains unsolved. In this the playwright's work is superbly realistic. The end of the last act verges upon the pathetic. It is symbolic of the whole drama. Everyone has left, with the exception of the father and mother.

(Mrs. Kennion sits in the left arm-chair. Mr.
Kennion draws an arm-chair up to the hearth.
Mrs. Kennion has her handkerchief out.)

1. Ibid., p. 223.

2. Ibid., p. 258.

Mrs. Kennion. I hope it's all for the best. We seem to be out of sympathy with mother, and with the children too.

Mr. Kennion. Mother is very old, and the children are very young. We must make allowances for them.

Mrs. Kennion. I sometimes wonder whether we are quite right after all.

(Mrs. Kennion wipes her eyes. Mr. Kennion leans forward and pats her knee gently. They sit staring into the fire for a very long time, silent, immobile. The curtain creeps down very, very slowly.)¹

We realize that this play is much more serious in its treatment of life than either of the preceding dramas. The Younger Generation more nearly approaches the ideal of realism. It possesses, as Mr. Henry Arthur Jones would say, "the eaves-dropping convention of realistic drama."

Partners, written after The Younger Generation, in 1911, has many of the light touches usually ascribed to French comedy. The action takes place in the lounge of a beach hotel. In Act. I. Sir Isaac and Lady Grundy are interrupted at tea by the entrance of Cynthia. She has come in to pay Lady Grundy her "bridge" debts. Oliver (he has no last name) enters and

1. Ibid., pp. 263-264.

we find that he is in love with Cynthia and is planning to elope with her that evening. Cynthia tells Oliver that she and her husband, Vernon, are enjoying a month's vacation from each other. Neither one of them knows where the other is. Oliver leaves to buy tickets for himself and Cynthia. Vernon enters carrying a large bouquet of violets, obviously not purchased for Cynthia. Oliver returns and is presented to Cynthia's husband. Cynthia changes her mind about eloping with Oliver. In Act II., Lydia, Oliver's wife, appears. It develops that she was eloping with Vernon. Lady Grundy, true to her name, tells Vernon of Cynthia's affairs. Cynthia quarrels with both Vernon and Oliver and exits, throwing Vernon's violets on the floor. Vernon rescues the violets, just as the curtain falls. In Act III. Vernon presents the violets to Lydia, for whom they were originally intended. Lady Grundy again officiates as gossip monger. Cynthia attempts to re-establish herself in Oliver's affections but is spurned. The act ends with a "row" between the men in which the women assist. Vernon goes off with his wife Cynthia, and Oliver with his Lydia.

The theme of this play, if it has one, is distinctly farcical in nature. The incredible situation with its brisk moving dialogue is rescued from the purely farcical merely by the characterization. The theme is rendered rather cheap by the physical "row" (there is no other word for it) at the end of Act III. A quarrel between the men is what one expects

from the middle of Act I. when Vernon enters, but the physical demonstration seems very bad taste. Furthermore, the participation of the women in the "row" gives the play a music-hall flavor.

The introduction of Sir Isaac and Lady Grundy into the comedy is distinctly beneficial. Sir Isaac knows that Lady Grundy cheats at cards; therefore he pays back all that she wins to the loser. His sense of justice is amusing, but scarcely convincing. There is much that is quotable from the play. Here are two of Cynthia's speeches. Oliver has just called her his "darling".

Cynthia. You must not say such things to me in private, Oliver. I do not object to your making love to me publicly, because everybody does that, and so I am not compromised by your attentions. Indeed, it would cause comment if you did not make love to me publicly; everyone would be certain you had a very good reason for not doing so.¹

The above speech has a strong flavor of Wilde. The following speech of Cynthia's on husbands, is clever rather than realistic.

Oliver. You like me.

1. Ibid., v. 2, p. 15.

Cynthia. I like cake; but if I had nothing to eat but cake, I should pine for bread and butter. You are not commonplace enough to perform the ordinary daily duties of a husband.¹

The dialogue is, throughout, of that sparkling and witty nature usually associated with the name of Oscar Wilde. But on the whole, the comedy is distinctly disappointing after the glimpses of greatness in Mr. Houghton's Younger Generation. At least, Partners can scarcely be said to prophesy the powerful realism of the play which followed it, Hindle Wakes.

The Perfect Cure, written in 1912, called forth a veritable storm of protest from the critics. After Hindle Wakes, which we shall treat later, the theme seems very small. The three acts of The Perfect Cure are built upon the foundation of Vincent Cray's selfishness. In the first act, we are introduced to Cray, a widower, whose daughter Madge drudges for him. Madge's lover, Tom Probyn, to whom she is secretly engaged, is urging her on toward an immediate marriage. Cray feigns illness, whereupon Madge writes her refusal to Tom. In the midst of this scene Martha Scandrett, Cray's cousin who understands him perfectly, arrives in time to prevent the posting of the letter. In the second act, Martha has made up her mind to marry Cray, whom she once loved. She convinces Madge and ap-

1. Ibid., p. 21.

peals to Cray's vanity in order to cure him. Cray puts himself in a sort of "training", actually putting his own boots on, to the amazement of his daughter Madge. In Act III. Madge marries Tom. Martha works a complete change in Cray and, after a sharp struggle between her common sense and his vanity, he sends the young couple away happy. Thereupon, Martha promises to marry Cray.

As an instance of Mr. Houghton's best comic style there is a memorable scene between Cray and Madge. The following is only a part of the dialogue in which Cray successfully plays upon his daughter's feelings. It is a remarkable piece of sustained comedy, because we are aware that the whole thing is feigned.

(Madge gives Cray some brandy.)

Cray (feebly). I had always hoped you would have been near to close my eyes at the last.....

Madge (weeping). Father.....

Cray. It won't be long now. My days are numbered.....

Madge. Oh! I can't leave you. I'll write to Tom and tell him we shall have to wait.

Cray (very feebly). No, no. I can't have it..... I won't agree to such a sacrifice. You're not to write to-night.

Madge. Yes, I will. Tonight.

(A pause. She sits still by the table.)

Cray (at length). Did you say you were going to write to-night?

Madge. Yes.

(A pause. Cray looks at the clock.)

Cray. Of course, if you insist on writing to-night.

(She sits at the table and writes hurriedly.)

Cray (whilst she is writing). What are you doing, my dear? I won't have it..... I forbid you. Don't worry about me..... You must leave me to my fate..... Leave me to die alone..... I shan't be here to trouble you long. Tell him that.....¹

When Madge is unable to find a stamp, he feebly finds one for her and assures her that he is able to stay alone.

There is, in my estimation, one flaw in the characterization of The Perfect Cure. That is in Houghton's picture of Cray in Act. I. from which we have quoted above. It is amusing but perhaps more of a caricature than a characterization. The gradual change in Cray's nature throughout Acts II. and III. is much more convincing than the portrait of him in Act I. Even if there are people as selfish as Cray with daughters as blind as Madge (we doubt it), why did Houghton waste his marvellous gift of realism upon them? Like the timely arrival of Gordon Leigh in Marriages in the Making, coincidence comes in to assist

1. Ibid., p. 221.

the heroine. We wonder if in real life Martha Scandrett would not have arrived after the posting of the letter to Tom. Then, too, the dramatist's theme of filial obedience, of the kind described, is as hopelessly out of fashion as the ducking-stool. It is unusual that a realist capable of Hindle Wakes should descend to Don Quixote's favorite pastime of tilting at windmills. It would seem to be as useless as an attack upon the old Hindu custom of widow burning.

In reviewing the longer plays of Stanley Houghton, Hindle Wakes being excluded, there are certain definite merits and faults to be observed. Independent Means almost touches the tragic, but ends, Pollyanna fashion, smilingly, with none of its problems solved. Marriages in the Making and The Perfect Cure are of the type traditionally popular with the "box-office". They are amusing but nothing more. The Younger Generation is better than the others of this group because it presents an adequate problem and treats it adequately.

It remains to mention two interesting, but unimportant, instances of the unusual in Houghton's technique. He has a fondness for the triangular shaped stage. His settings are always interesting and serve as a mild stimulant to the action. A noteworthy example of his use of the triangular stage is, as we have pointed out, in The Younger Generation. As a result he gains an intimacy unequalled by anything else, except perhaps that of Maurice Maeterlinck in Interieur. Another detail of

the unusual in Houghton's technique is found in Partners. There the action of Act II. follows that of Act I. without a lapse of time, the action going straight on.

There is, however, apart from such incidents of technique already mentioned, an excellent reason for a detailed study of these plays. Usually, even a second-rate dramatist can create a realistic plot, but it takes a great dramatist to build up a character that will live. It is in this respect that Houghton surpasses the merely second-rate writer. The characterization is, as it should be, the most important part of a play. Any dramatist capable of creating the egotistical Edgar Forsyth in Independent Means, the calculating Mrs. Cartwright in Marriages in the Making, or the provincial Kennion family in The Younger Generation, deserves consideration. It is interesting that Partners, written just before Hindle Wakes, as well as The Perfect Cure, which was written just after it, are notably weaker than Houghton's masterpiece. Undeniably, The Younger Generation is the only play in this group that measures up to Hindle Wakes.

CHAPTER III.

THE SHORTER PLAYS AND NON-DRAMATIC WRITING.

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So far, the study of Mr. Houghton's work has been confined to his most noteworthy long plays, with the exception of Hindle Wakes. In this chapter the six most characteristic one-act plays and the non-dramatic writing of this dramatist will be the subject of discussion. Since two of the one-act plays, The Fifth Commandment and Fancy Free, are identical in theme with the longer plays, The Perfect Cure and Partners, they will receive much less attention than the other four, which are The Old Testament and the New, The Dear Departed, The Master of the House, and Phipps. These plays are, like all other one-act plays, bound by certain limitations not found in the longer plays. Therefore, we do not expect the characterization in Mr. Houghton's The Dear Departed to be as careful as that found in The Younger Generation. But we do expect a one-act play to be a complete picture done as crisply and strikingly as the time limitation permits. How well Mr. Houghton succeeds in meeting the demands of the one-act play remains to be seen.

Judging by the titles of the plays written in the period before 1905, Houghton must have written melodrama.

After Naseby, The Last Shot, and The Blue Phial are obviously melodramatic, suggesting from their titles that an active imagination can recreate pictures of poor soldiers or lonely ladies in distress, who are driven to gun-play or "blue phials" of poison. But in The Old Testament and the New, 1905, Stanley Houghton begins to rise above the welter of blood and tears usually found in melodrama. That this play has certain touches which may be said to resemble its predecessors, there is no doubt. Christopher Battersby in The Old Testament and the New is the sort of man who still believes in the "Old Testament" standard of justice untempered by "New Testament" love. At the beginning of the action he is balancing his accounts as chapel steward. Martha, his frail old wife, is busy setting the table. Edward Fielding, who was to have married the Battersbys' daughter Mary if she had not eloped with a married man, comes in for supper. He tries to tell Martha that he has been married. But rather than hurt Martha's sentimental old heart, he says that he still loves Mary and that he would marry her if she came back. Edward goes out for a few minutes and Mary slides in through the half-opened outer door. Christopher receives the prodigal with no degree of affection, but Martha is almost overwhelmed with love for her only child. The stern Christopher will not allow Martha to embrace Mary. Mary says that she has always been faithful to the man she loved, but that the man's wife would not divorce him, so that they never

married. Edward returns and tells of his recent marriage. Christopher turns Mary out on the street when he finds that her reputation can not be rescued. The play ends with Martha fainting in her chair, and Christopher's announcement of his intention of reading aloud the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel.

This ending of the play gives a feeling of completeness accompanied by a trace of horror. The main theme of action is realistic and superbly serious in tone. But the play is marred by a touch of melodrama in the relation between Martha Battersby and her daughter. No mother who had not seen her daughter for several years would allow the girl to go without even touching her. Furthermore, the speeches are longer and less natural than those of Mr. Houghton's later plays. But as a whole, The Old Testament and the New deserves considerable credit in that it is powerful, clear and serious.

The Dear Departed, written three years after The Old Testament and the New (1908), gives evidence of Houghton's improving technique and realism. Thinking her father, Abel Merriweather, dead, Mrs. Slater has sent for her sister, Mrs. Jordan, in order to divide the old gentleman's property. The opening of the play finds Mr. and Mrs. Slater moving Abel's clock and bureau, purchased since Mrs. Jordan's last visit, into their own living-room. This has scarcely been done, when Mr. and Mrs. Jordan are ushered in by the Slaters' daughter

Victoria. Everyone is dressed in deep mourning. Abel's daughters are much troubled for fear he has forgotten to pay his insurance premium. In the midst of this discussion the old chap enters chuckling over the terror he has caused. His two daughters attempt to lie their way out of the situation without success. When Abel's daughters discover that their father intends to marry again they are absolutely nonplussed. The curtain falls upon a scene of complete mental paralysis following Abel Merriweather's announcement of his marriage, which is to take place the following Monday.

This play is by far the best of Mr. Houghton's one-act comedies. The play begins crisply and ends with an almost perfect "curtain". The dialogue, which is in a provincial dialect, ripples and sparkles with laughter. What could be more amusing than the scene where Victoria, a precocious girl of ten, almost gives the situation away.

(Victoria runs across to Abel and sits on the floor at his feet.)

Victoria. Oh, grandpa, I'm so glad you're not dead.

Mrs. Slater (in a vindictive whisper). Hold your tongue,

Victoria.

Abel. Eh? What's that? Who's gone dead?

Mrs. Slater (loudly). Victoria says she's sorry about your head.

Abel. Ah, thank you, Vicky, but I'm feeling better.

Mrs. Slater (to Mrs. Jordan). He's so fond of Victoria.

Mrs. Jordan (to Mrs. Slater). Yes; he's fond of our
Jimmy, too.

Mrs. Slater. You'd better ask him if he promised your
Jimmy his gold watch.

Mrs. Jordan (disconcerted). I couldn't just now. I
don't feel equal to it.¹

This may not be the best example of realistic dialogue in the play but it is one of the most quotable. The development of the plot is equalled only by the dramatist's masterly characterization of old Abel. As a picture of a shrewd, vigorous old man it is perfect. The curtain falls after the following piece of simple narration.

Abel. I'll tell you what I've got to do. On Monday next I've got to do three things. I've got to go to the lawyers and alter my will; and I've got to go to the insurance office to pay my premium; and I've got to go to St. Philips's Church to get married.

Mrs. Jordan. Get married!

Mrs. Slater. He's out of his senses.

(General consternation.)

1. Ibid., v. 3, pp. 43-44.

Abel. I say I'm going to get married.

Mrs. Slater. Who to?

Abel. To Mrs. John Shorrocks who keeps the Ring-o'-Bells.

We've had it fixed up a good while now, but I was keeping it for a pleasant surprise. I felt I was a bit of a burden to you, so I found some one who'd think it a pleasure to look after me. We shall be glad to see you at the ceremony. Till Monday, then. It's a good thing you brought that bureau downstairs, 'Melia. It'll be handier to carry across to the Ring-o'-Bells on Monday.¹

Stanley Houghton's next play, The Master of the House, is in a very different key. The drama has a touch of the eerie about it in the ending, where the dead man is left alone in the house. At rise, Mrs. Ovens and her sister Edie are sitting on opposite sides of the table talking about the invalid Mr. Ovens, who sits in his armchair at the back of the stage with his back toward the audience. Edie suggests that they give Mr. Ovens something to eat; they have just finished their tea. Mrs. Ovens doesn't care to be disturbed. Mrs. Ovens, the invalid's second wife, has sent for the lawyer in order to crowd Ovens' son Fred out of his inheritance. The woman's character is summarized in two of the lines in this scene.

1. Ibid., p. 57.

Mrs. Owens. He was sixty-six when I married him; he's seventy-one now. He'll not last much longer, and I'm only thirty-five.¹

Fred's unexpected arrival upsets his stepmother's plans. The object, of course, is to get Fred out of the house in order to change the will while Owens is still capable of signing it. The doctor, a wonderful, sane sort of person in the midst of so much strife, drops in for his daily call. He walks over toward Mr. Owens and tries to awaken him. His patient is dead. The last part of the action is remarkably crisp and concise. Fred turns Mrs. Owens and her sister out, and is left alone in the house. Gradually the figure of his father in his shroud changes him from a self-satisfied brute to a cringing coward who skulks out of the room, leaving the dead man "master of the house."

Obviously, the unusual combination of realistic characterization with the eerie figure of the dead man in the background, needs explanation. Fred is an ignorant cowardly half-savage; superstition and an evil conscience prove his undoing. Therefore Houghton carefully creates a situation which knocks all the false courage out of this bully. The unlighted room, the shrouded body of Fred's father, and the

1. Ibid., p. 57.

eerie effect of the moonlight upon this figure, reduce Fred to hysteria. Mr. Houghton's use of hysteria is, in small degree, not unlike Eugene O'Neil's in Emperor Jones. In both instances a man slowly crumbles into hysteria, although Fred's moral collapse is much less complete than that of Jones. The economy of speech in the last scene, in which Fred is left alone with the seated figure in its shroud, is excellent. It is worth quoting, in part at least. Fred has been looking at the figure in the chair.

Fred. Pleasant night. Hm! You won't interfere with me. I'm not--afraid of you. You can't turn me out of doors now. (Fred shivers.) I've no money. (He thinks.) They always used to keep some money in the sideboard drawer. Can't see a thing, and I've no matches. (He pulls up the blind. As he turns he comes full on the silent figure of Mr. Ovens, sitting rigid, ghastly in the glare of the moon. Fred starts back with an oath and drops the cash-box.) Don't look at me like that. You can't frighten me. You shan't turn me out, I tell you. Don't look at me like that! I didn't know you were dead when I cursed you. (Another pause: he shudders and covers his face with his hands.) God! I can't stand it. (He steals silently out of the room. The front door is heard closing.)

The Fifth Commandment and Fancy Free, both written during the month of March, 1911, duplicate the themes in The Perfect Cure and Partners, respectively. In The Fifth Commandment there is another daughter acting as slave to a parent, like Madge Cray and her father, Vincent Cray, in this instance Mrs. Mountain and Nelly. As in the case of the longer play, there is a suitor who will not wait for the parent to die. Nelly, faced with the problem of a choice between love and duty, accepts the latter. There is a certain Mr. Shoosmith who is in love with Mrs. Mountain. Nelly informs him of her mother's illness (an illness which is feigned like Mr. Cray's in The Perfect Cure). But Mr. Shoosmith will have nothing to do with Mrs. Mountain when he hears of her being an invalid; he profits, in this case, by his experience with an invalid first wife. The play closes with Mrs. Mountain's resumption of her novel. She is perfectly contented. Now, although the play is a comedy it touches upon the tragic in the case of Nelly and her sweetheart. There is no one to interfere here, as there was in The Perfect Cure, so that Nelly's problem is unsolved. As in the longer play, the characterization is good, but the theme weak. As for Fancy Free, the pocket edition of Partners, little can be said in its favor. It lacks much of the sparkle of the longer play. Again we have two young married couples, Fancy and her husband Alfred, Ethelbert and Delia. The main distinction is in the ending, for the two women exchange hus-

bands, and everything goes on as before. The serious note is lacking in this treatment of the Partners theme. It is the sort of thing one would expect from a hack writer, not Stanley Houghton. Furthermore it is the one play of this dramatist that drags its skirts into the mud of vulgarity.

Phipps is the last of Houghton's plays included in the Brighthouse edition, and the worst. It is lifted above the level of farce merely through its characterization. Sir Gerald and Lady Fanny are in the midst of a lively argument when the curtain rises. They are both anxious for a divorce and have decided that "grounds" must be created. Cruelty seems the most likely thing, whereupon they plan a scene of that kind and ring for the butler, Phipps. This servant, instead of merely acting as witness, as they had intended, knocks Sir Gerald down, and addressing Lady Fanny calmly inquires if she rang for him. When they explain the matter to this perfect specimen of servitude, he solves the problem for them by patching up their quarrel. Phipps then tells Lady Fanny he is in love with her and gives notice at the same time. Whereupon Lady Fanny murmurs rapturously to her husband, "Oh Gerald! If only you would try to be more like him."¹ In exactly what way, we are left to imagine. There can be no doubt about the brilliance of dialogue in this play. But if Houghton was

1. Ibid., v. 3, p. 135.

attempting farce, he failed. Even as a farce it is forced and trifling. In fact, there is nothing in the whole play that interests us except Phipps himself. But even Phipps appears to be a somewhat imperfect reflection of Barrie's Admirable Crichton. The play is a failure.

Of this group of Houghton's one-act plays, The Dear Departed stands out as The Younger Generation did in the longer plays. It possesses all those things generally expected from a one-act play, good characterization, notably Abel Merriweather, crisp dialogue and completeness of situation. The other one-act plays fail in different ways. The Old Testament and the New is a serious attempt but unconvincing in the daughter-mother relationship. The Master of the House is good drama but not, strictly speaking, good realism, especially in the character of Fred Ovens. Fancy Free and The Fifth Commandment are inadequate developments of the themes of Partners and The Perfect Cure. Phipps is almost a farce and therefore unworthy of a great dramatist and realist. Of these six plays only one, The Dear Departed, has been produced more than once. On the whole, a play that is worth as many performances as this one has had, will live. This play of Mr. Houghton's deserves to be handed down, as we have said before, because of its excellent characterization and its amusing theme.

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Any treatment of Stanley Houghton's realism that did not contain a brief statement of that found in his non-dramatic work would be incomplete. The Dramatic Criticisms, in the last volume of the published works, may be omitted since they are not, strictly speaking, creative work. The Essays and Sketches include many realistic descriptions. In Fritz's, for example, the description of the once popular restaurant with its doughty host is obviously drawn from London life. This same volume includes, beside the above mentioned essays and criticisms four short stories, chosen by Mr. Brighouse as typical. The Dying Lie is so melodramatic that it almost offends us, because the time is past when the "stealthy-footed" villain can pursue the heroine to her husband's deathbed without arousing healthy amusement. The Time of his Life is farcical in nature, and faintly reminiscent of Booth Tarkington's tales of adolescent youth. One wonders if in Grey, the idealistic young man caught in the machinery of business is not drawn from Mr. Houghton's own experiences in his father's office in Meal Street, Manchester. Through realistic description we see this Charles Edward as a dramatic figure. He would have been excellent in a drama like Miss Baker's Chains. Even in this short-story we see things through the eyes of a realist, for the whole is written in the unmistakable tone of pessimism.

The fragment of unfinished novel that Stanley Houghton left for us, is entitled Life. The story, so far as the author carries us, deals with a young girl with a weak will, named Maggie. Finding herself engaged to one man but in love with another, she elopes with her lover. She finds the man she ran off with to be already married. The actual ending is suggested in certain lines in Mr. Houghton's note-book. "Maggie goes on the street" and "Maggie's religious feelings grow strong." There are traces, here, of the Hindle Wakes theme. The pessimism of Houghton's realism comes out in the title. Maggie's life was evidently the result of certain unfortunate circumstances. Houghton's title Life, therefore, suggests that he meant that all life was a succession of more or less unfortunate accidents.

In concluding this analysis of the shorter plays and non-dramatic writing, certain features appear. The graph of a writer's work generally undulates to a certain extent, and these plays and stories may be said to represent some of those undulations. The novel Life, the story Grey, and the one-act play The Dear Departed, represent high points in the curve of Houghton's writing. The Master of the House and Phipps are the lower points in this curve. But even the severest of critics would grant Mr. Houghton an occasional experiment or failure. However, there is nothing in this group that would entitle him to particular notice. As Mr. Courtney would say,

"the passionate hatred of hypocrisy and sham", so essentially a part of a great realist's work, is lacking.

CHAPTER IV.

HINDLE WAKES

Throughout the previous chapters, it has been more than once suggested that Hindle Wakes is the culmination of Stanley Houghton's literary efforts. Furthermore, this play has been the standard by which his other writings have been measured. Therefore this chapter contains a summary of Hindle Wakes, a criticism of the play, and a comparison of it with St. John Ervine's Magnanimous Lover, and John Galsworthy's The Eldest Son, two other plays presenting treatments of the same theme.

The action of the play begins with the August bank-holiday, which terminates the midsummer week-end, known in Lancashire as "the wakes". In Act I. Christopher Hawthorn, a mill-worker, and his wife are sitting in their living-room kitchen, awaiting the return of their daughter Fanny. Fanny comes in talking about her interesting week-end spent with her friend Mary, at the nearby summer resort of Blackpool. Fanny's mother puts her through a cross-examination. The parents doubt her story. Fanny says she will bring Mary in as witness in the case. Christopher tells his daughter he has already been at Blackpool during the day to see Mary. Fanny begins to be

frightened. Christopher tells Fanny that Mary has been drowned. Overwhelmed by her friend's death, Fanny confesses to having gone off with Alan Jeffcote. Mrs. Hawthorn, after the girl's exit, tells Christopher to go up and interview Nathaniel Jeffcote, Alan's father. The second scene of Act I. deals with Christopher's interview with Jeffcote. It also appears that Alan is engaged to marry Beatrice Farrar, the daughter of another wealthy mill owner. Jeffcote gives Christopher his word to see that Fanny is "treated right". Scene 3, Act I., sees the return of Alan Jeffcote. In trying to light the gas, he upsets a vase which falls with a crash, bringing old Jeffcote down to investigate the noise. After considerable paternal pressure Alan tells of his escapade with Fanny, whereupon Jeffcote orders him to marry the girl.

Act II. opens with a scene between Jeffcote and his wife, in which he tells her that Alan will have to break his engagement to Beatrice to marry Fanny. Sir Timothy Farrar and Beatrice drop in to call and are informed of the Alan-Fanny affair. Alan is shown to be very much in love with Beatrice, who returns his affection. Alan tells Beatrice that the affair was a "lark". Beatrice, however, can not see it in that light and tells Alan she will never marry him "whilst Fanny Hawthorn has a better right."

At rise in Act III. Ada, the Jeffcote's maid, shows Christopher, Mrs. Hawthorn and Fanny into the room. When the Jeffcotes enter there is a feeling of constraint until Jeffcote takes the situation into his own hands. The two young people admit they were registered as man and wife, at a certain hotel from Saturday till Monday during "the wakes". Jeffcote says he gave his word to see Fanny well treated, and he intends that the wedding shall take place at once. Everything is planned by the older people when Fanny suddenly interrupts, saying that she doesn't intend marrying Alan. Believing Alan able to persuade her, the parents leave the young people alone. Fanny tells Alan that he isn't the sort of man she would care to marry. She foresees only an unhappy marriage. Furthermore, she tells him she went into the thing in the same spirit he did; it was only a "lark". She maintains her self-confidence even after the older people return. The Jeffcotes are surprised but delighted at Fanny's attitude. Christopher Hawthorn is sympathetic but Mrs. Hawthorn tells Fanny "she may pack off". After the Hawthorns have left (Alan showing them out) the Jeffcotes await his return. Alan comes in to announce his instant departure for the Farrars. The final curtain comes down upon Alan's parents ruminating upon the situation, Jeffcote expressing his disgust with Alan.

Even this somewhat sketchy summary reveals the purpose of the play. Hindle Wakes is almost without action, the plot is slight, but its strength depends on revelation of character. These scenes are of the simplest, yet they possess the qualities of suspense and interest. The careful maintenance of suspense in the interesting first scene of Act I. is an example. The audience is given to understand that the Hawthorns know more about Fanny's week-end with Mary than is shown, but just what this information is, we do not learn until Christopher tells Fanny of her chum's death. Then, again, in the third act, there is Houghton's careful focusing of attention upon the one silent figure in the scene. The Jeffcotes and Hawthorns are even planning the details of the wedding, but we feel that Fanny will eventually disrupt their plans; therefore our attention is centered on that quiet figure in the head-shawl. All the discussion between Fanny's parents, as well as that between Jeffcote and Christopher, has led us to expect the unusual from this girl. We are not disappointed. This is, of course, the big scene of the play. Up until this scene Fanny seems to have been controlled by the situations; now she turns the tables. Her defense, with its refusal of "the reparation of marriage", leaves the audience with something serious to think about.

The reason for the play's success does not depend wholly upon its extraordinary ending. The whole play is made

interesting, on the stage, by Houghton's use of the pungent dialect of Lancashire. The way in which the dramatist searches out the petty prejudices of the Jeffcotes and the Hawthorns and balances these with equally petty weaknesses, is a revelation of humor. Here are the materials of tragedy, treated with a quiet terse humor. As we shall see later, Galsworthy and Ervine both prefer the tragic treatment. But Houghton, although he touches the tragic in the death of Mary and its effect upon Fanny in Act I., and in the terrible disillusionment of Beatrice Farrar, leavens the whole by his use of the comic. As usual this is Houghton's realism, for life is at times tragic and at times comic in tone, but more frequently the two elements are blended. The thunderstorm background of Act I., Scene 1, in which Mrs. Hawthorn browbeats the truth out of her daughter, may be said to be the one fly in the ointment of Houghton's realism, for stage thunder is never realistic. As for Beatrice Farrar, her disillusionment is not entirely tragic because of her own standards. There is in Act II. that memorable scene between Beatrice and Alan. This is the culmination of their discussion.

Alan. If only you'll stick to me. If only you'll tell me you forgive me.

Beatrice (at length). Could you have forgiven me if I had done the same as you?

Alan (surprised). But you--you--couldn't do it!

Beatrice. Fanny Hawthorn did.

Alan. She's not your class.

Beatrice. She's a woman.

Alan. That's just it. It's different with a woman.

Beatrice. Yet you expect me to forgive you. It doesn't seem fair.

Alan. It isn't fair. But it's usual.

Beatrice. I can see that there is a difference between men and women in cases of this sort.

Alan. You can?

Beatrice. Men haven't so much self-control.

Alan. Don't be cruel, Bee. There's no need to rub it in!

Beatrice. I'm not being personal, Alan. I'm old-fashioned enough to really believe there is that difference. You see, men have never had to exercise self-control like women have. And so I'm old-fashioned enough to be able to forgive you.¹

We can be sorry for Beatrice, but there is nothing in her character that is particularly tragic.

There is, too, the inevitable lightening of the tragic by touches of the comic, previously spoken of. The following

1. Houghton, Stanley: Works, v. 2, p. 155.

instance is quoted as an example of Houghton's silver lining. Jeffcote has always been aware of his son's short comings, but the blow has rather upset Mrs. Jeffcote. She has been attempting to persuade Jeffcote not to break the Beatrice-Alan engagement. Suddenly with a characteristically feminine shift of mood she says:

Strike a light, Nat.

(He lights the gas.)

Do I look as if I'd been crying?

Jeffcote. Why? Have you been crying?

Mrs. Jeffcote. Er--no!

Jeffcote. It doesn't show. Nothing to speak of!¹

This is perhaps a somewhat inconspicuous detail but it is characteristic of Houghton's method. This is an example of his knowledge of life. Our minds, like Mrs. Jeffcote's, skip from the serious to the trivial, from cowardly sons to unpowdered noses.

Equally important with Houghton's treatment of his theme is the characterization. In the first place, Alan is an out and out coward. Houghton makes us feel Alan's cowardice and conceit. In the scene between Alan and Beatrice, instead

1. Ibid., p. 137.

of saying he can't give Beatrice up, he says,

"Bee, you're talking nonsense. You can't give me up--
you can't give me up, however much you try."¹

Then, too, there is the scene between Fanny and Alan, in the last act.

Fanny. You can't understand a girl not jumping at you
when she gets the chance, can you?

Alan. I can't understand you not taking me when you
get the chance.²

But it is in the last scene before the final curtain that we get the full value of Houghton's characterization. Alan announces his intention of running around to the Farrars'.

Mrs. Jeffcote. You're going to ask her to marry you?

Alan (laconically). Happen I am!

Jeffcote. Well, I'm damned! Dost thou reckon she'll
have thee?

Alan. That remains to be seen.

Jeffcote. Well, if Beatrice Farrar can fancy thee, it's
not for me to be too particular.

Alan. Thank you, father.

Jeffcote. Get along! I'm disgusted with thee!³

1. Ibid., p. 157.

2. Ibid., p. 170.

3. Ibid., p. 181.

This last bit of dialogue characterizes Jeffcote, as well as Alan. Old Jeffcote is an excellent business man, even his plans for his son are built on a material foundation. When he is faced with the Fanny-Alan problem, he does just what we would expect from a business man, he satisfies himself that it is true by examining the evidence. Having come to a decision, he gives Alan his ultimatum, because "he believes that marriage alone can heal the wound to a woman's honor."¹ Mrs. Hawthorn is a consistently disagreeable old shrew. It is always Christopher who tempers the wind for Fanny. The following dialogue is characteristic of Mrs. Hawthorn.

Mrs. Hawthorn. I say, I wonder if she's done this on purpose, after all. Plenty of girls have made good matches that way.

Christopher. She said they never mentioned marriage. You heard her.

Mrs. Hawthorn. Well, he mightn't have gone with her if she had. Happen she's cleverer than we think.²

And again, in the last act after Fanny has announced her decision:

Christopher. Take no heed of it! My missus don't rightly know what she's saying just now.

1. Chandler, F. W.: Aspects of Modern Drama, p. 325.

2. Houghton, Stanley: Works, v. 2, p. 103.

Mrs. Hawthorn. Don't she? You're making a big mistake if you think that. Fanny can go home and fetch her things and after that she may pack off.

Christopher. That she'll not!

Mrs. Hawthorn. Then I'll make it so hot for her in the house, and for thee, too, that thou'll be glad to see the back of her!¹

There can be no question of Mrs. Hawthorn's ability to make it uncomfortable for her family. As for the characterization of Fanny, it is as near perfect as anything I know of. In Act I., her father speaks of her as a mystery.

Christopher. I can't defend her. She's always been a bit of a mystery to her mother and me. There's that in her veins as keeps her restless and uneasy. If she sees you want her to do one thing she'll go right away and do t'other out of pure cussedness. She won't be driven, not any road. I had a dog just like her once.²

Now Fanny may be stubborn, but she is no mystery to Houghton's audience at the end of the play. Some of Houghton's critics have said Fanny is nothing but an animal, others have declared

1. Ibid., p. 179.

2. Ibid., p. 116.

her to be the dramatist's representation of the "new woman". Actually, it would seem that Fanny possesses both of these characteristics. She is a handsome animal, "a hot-blooded little wench," as Jeffcote would say, who defends herself to Alan in a most unusual manner, the manner of the "new woman."

Alan. But you didn't ever really love me?

Fanny. Love you? Good heavens, of course not! Why on earth should I love you? You were just some one to have a bit of fun with. You were an amusement--a lark.¹

Later on she says:

You're not good enough for me. My husband, if ever I have one, will be a man, not a fellow who'll throw over his girl at his father's bidding!²

After Christopher has tried to interfere she reassures him by saying,

I'm a Lancashire lass, and so long as there's weaving sheds in Lancashire I shall earn enough brass to keep me going. I'm going to be on my own in future.
(To Christopher.) You've no call to be afraid.

1. Ibid., p. 175.

2. Ibid., p. 176.

I'm not going to disgrace you. But so long as I've to live my own life I don't see why I shouldn't choose what it's to be.¹

John Galsworthy's treatment of this theme, that of the refusal of a reparation marriage, is entirely unlike Stanley Houghton's. In The Eldest Son the woman, Freda, is the daughter of the head-keeper Studdenham, while the man, Bill Cheshire, is the eldest son of Sir William Cheshire. Therefore the background of the two plays is different. There was in Hindle Wakes a certain amount of equality between the Jeffcotes and the Hawthorns, due to their common interests, but in The Eldest Son the two families are as far apart socially as it is possible for them to be. From the beginning, we are made to feel this difference, and to pity Freda Studdenham. Bill has tired of her but she still loves him. Furthermore she is to have a child. Unlike the Jeffcotes and Hawthorns who strive to push the Fanny-Alan marriage forward, the Cheshires and old Studdenham are both against Freda's marrying Bill. In both plays the man's father threatens the son with disinheritance, but for directly opposite reasons. The character of Bill Cheshire is quite different from that of Alan Jeffcote. There is about both Freda and Bill the glamour of courage. Freda is crowded into a public confession by circumstance (she had not intended to tell), while Bill's conscience forces him to live up to his

1. Ibid., p. 179.

promise of marriage. As for Freda's final refusal of Bill, we feel assured that she does it for young Cheshire's good because she loves him. Beside these two young persons, there are three other notable characters, Lady Cheshire, Sir William and Studdenham. Lady Cheshire is the sort of "great lady" who thinks there are no limits to self-control, a "Spartan mother". Sir William is a somewhat unconvincing old hypocrite. He rants about the under-keeper's marriage to a village girl whom he has seduced, but when he faces the problem of his own son with his wife's maid he says, "Morality be damned." Studdenham has a sense of pride resembling, in some degree, that of Fanny Hawthorn in Hindle Wakes. The two speeches which follow are what one might expect from Houghton's heroine.

Studdenham (speaking of Freda.) We want none of you!

She'll not force herself where she's not welcome.

She may ha' slipped her good name, but she'll keep her proper pride. I'll have no charity marriage in my family.--If the young gentleman has tired of her in three months, as a blind man can see by the looks of him--she's not for him!¹

It may be seen from this summary of The Eldest Son that it is unlike Hindle Wakes at several points. First, this

1. Galsworthy, John: Plays, Second Series, p. 73.

is the usual, conventional problem. Here is the stone wall of caste between Freda and Bill. Second, Freda is a weak sort of woman so sentimental that she makes Fanny appear doubly hard by contrast. She gives up the idea of marriage, not for her own sake as Fanny did, but because she fears she will harm Bill. Third, the spirit of the Galsworthy play is different from Hindle Wakes in that the union between Freda and Bill was love, while that between Fanny and Alan was the result of a lark. Fourth, the plays differ in that there is no child to consider in Hindle Wakes as there is in The Eldest Son. It follows naturally that Galsworthy's play is the more conventional and more sentimental of the two.

St. John Ervine in The Magnanimous Lover has chosen to view the problem from another angle. In tone the play, which is written in one act, is more like Hindle Wakes than The Eldest Son. Mr. Ervine's people, like Mr. Houghton's, are not far removed from their common peasant traditions. Here, too, there is an economy in cast, there being but five persons in the play. Maggie Cather refuses to marry Henry Hinde because his offer is ten years too late. She knows that it is only Henry's suddenly acquired religion that has made him return to her. Henry's father and Maggie's mother urge the marriage. William Cather, Maggie's father, is the only person in the play who understands her refusal. Henry Hinde's character has been carefully drawn by Mr. Ervine and may be briefly glimpsed in

Henry's speech to William near the beginning of the play. There is about Henry Hinde the same conceit that permeated the atmosphere about Alan Jeffcote, but in this case the conceit is tainted by hypocrisy. This is the speech:

Henry Hinde. I felt it to be my duty to come back. Mind it's not because I couldn't get anyone else. It's because it's the will of God. "Not my will, O Lord, but Thine be done." I could marry a minister's daughter if I wanted to.¹

As for Ervine's characterization of Maggie, it is partially revealed in the following:

Maggie Cather. Listen, Henry Hinde. There was nothing but contempt for me at first. Fellows on the street treated me like dirt beneath their feet. And all the time you were in Liverpool, and were thought a lot of. It wasn't fair. And it wasn't me only. I mind once I was coming down an entry, and I saw a lot of children tormenting the child.---They made him say, "I'm a wee bastard." Aw, if I could have laid hand on you then, Henry, I would have throttled you.²

1. Ervine, St. John G.: Four Irish Plays, p. 62.

2. Ibid., p. 69.

This speech of Maggie Cather's, just quoted, separates her both from Fanny Hawthorn and from Freda Studdenham. There is neither selfishness nor sentimentality about Maggie. She has suffered and her ten years of pain have given her a bitter pride. Her refusal of Henry, therefore, is not based on her reason as Fanny's was, but upon her pride. At the end of the action, Maggie gives the following reply to Mrs. Cather's question about Henry's not being good enough.

Maggie. He was too good. If you heard what he said to me. He said I was a sinful, lustful woman, and could never be as good as he is. It wasn't me he was thinking of: it was himself. I'm not needing to marry, but if I do, I'll marry to save my own soul and not Henry Hinde's.¹

After the comparisons made here, certain salient points of difference between these three dramas appear. The Eldest Son is, technically speaking, an excellent play but it is conventional and sentimental. It is conventional in that it deals with the usual rich man's son who has seduced his mother's maid. Furthermore, it is sentimental in that Freda's reason for refusing Bill is the conventional one, she fears she will ruin his life. Therefore, Galsworthy's Freda is a somewhat drab figure of pity, whereas Fanny Hawthorn is a vividly

1. Ibid., p. 76.

forceful example of the economically independent Lancashire mill-girl. In The Magnanimous Lover, St. John Ervine has given us a remarkable character in the person of Maggie Cather. She is a superbly courageous woman moved by a magnificent pride, but she lacks Fanny's clear, cool way of looking at the world. Therefore the play is less striking than Mr. Houghton's. On the other hand, Hindle Wakes is technically as good as The Eldest Son, but none of the ugly facts in it are glossed over by sentiment as they are in Mr. Galsworthy's drama. Hindle Wakes is an unusual portrayal of a real type, for Fanny is a hard self-realized woman, wholly apart from her experience.

Hindle Wakes represents Mr. Houghton at his best as a remarkable technician and realist. After all, realism is largely a matter of view point. It proves, too, that Houghton could write dialogue which has been but rarely surpassed for its quiet humor. The whole play is an undisguised attack on life as a purely sentimental thing. The tremendous success of the drama partially proves its value. It has been played with success from South Africa to Copenhagen. There is but one failure to its credit and that was in New York. Why? Because we may have been lacking in discerning critics, or perhaps New York thought the play too unusual. Perhaps Mr. Houghton did not sweeten his realism enough for America. If an American audience can be made to swallow real problems, the dramatist who undertakes the task had best sugar-coat them with sentiment.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUSION.

Before making a summary of Mr. Houghton's realism, a brief review of the dramatic criticisms of his plays will prove interesting. Naturally there is very little criticism extant of the plays which preceded Hindle Wakes. Therefore, the bulk of critical opinion is confined to Mr. Houghton's masterpiece and the plays which followed it.

The Graphic for July 27, 1912, includes an informal criticism of the first London production of Hindle Wakes.

"The night was sweltering: the author quite unknown to most of us: not a name in the cast was familiar to London playgoers: and yet the play held the house as in a vice, and why? Because it is a study in real life, written by a man who knows what he is writing about. Someone once said of a well-known dramatist that his pictures of a drawing-room were taken from the angle at which the dirty little street boy looks at the plate glass through the area railings. That cannot be said of Mr. Houghton's brilliant glimpse of Lancashire life. It heightens its dramatic quality by dealing with Northern types of a fierce, elemental kind, the drama consisting of the conflict between the repressive conservatism of middle age and the changing ideals of youth." Speaking of Fanny the critic says, "her code has, at any rate, the sanction of overwhelming common sense, and,

like every part of the play, its strong clear sight is compulsive."¹

John Palmer, dramatic critic of The Saturday Review, gives, in the issue for June, 1912, an entirely different judgment. He insinuates in no uncertain terms that Mr. Houghton borrows everything but the first scene from Mr. Shaw. "Alan," says Mr. Palmer, "explaining his lapse to the fiancée he had temporarily abandoned for Fanny plunged at once into an exposition of Mr. Shaw's celebrated distinction between the strictly impersonal and simple instinct of sex and the highly personal and complex delight of agreeable companionship."² It would seem that Mr. Palmer was wearing his melodramatic spectacles that evening, for he comments recklessly upon the scene between Fanny and her mother as "the best thing in the play." Furthermore, he liked the thunderstorm, which is, in my opinion, the most melodramatic and unrealistic thing in the play. After commenting upon this scene, he dismisses the rest of the play, which he misnames Hindley Wakes, in the following manner. "If Mr. Houghton had continued in this fashion--I mean, if Mr. Houghton's characters had played the play as he intended--I should have celebrated Hindley Wakes rather differently."³

1. Graphic, v. 86, p. 146.

2. Sat. Review, v. 113, p. 774.

3. Ibid., p. 775.

Fanny seems to have been hailed with more or less disgust by the critics. The critic in Current Opinion for September, 1913, calls her "the dangerous new free woman who expresses her ultra-radical feminism and her simple theory of the economic independence of woman." Another critic calls her "a handsome animal who has slouched into the adventure and now she slouches out of it without emotion."¹ It would seem that both of these critics allowed their personal opinion to ride rough-shod over their judgment. Actually, Fanny is neither a dangerous feminist nor a "handsome animal". She has no more of the handsome animal about her than the average woman, but she is capable of cold-bloodedly looking at her experience from a rational view point.

Hindle Wakes failed in New York. According to McClure's for March 1913, "the play did not meet here with a shadow of the success it had in London. It is written in the quiet tone popular among the younger English dramatists, who are so determined not to be artificially conclusive that they are sometimes more inconclusive than they need to be."²

Fancy Free, though written before Hindle Wakes, was produced after it. It was produced in 1913 in New York, but it received rather scant attention. Harper's Weekly for June

1. American Playwright: v. 2, pp. 5-6.

2. McClure's, v. 40, p. 69.

21, 1913, contains the following criticism: "The author of Fancy Free has given it the light imitable touch of French comedy, or of the delightfully artificial comedy of the Restoration."¹ Another brief criticism of Fancy Free is to be found in the Bookman for May 1913. "It seems surprising that the author of the unadorned and naturalistic dialogue of Hindle Wakes should show himself equally at home in the brilliantly witty type of composition that was made illustrious by Oscar Wilde."²

The Younger Generation, although written in 1909, was first produced two weeks after Fancy Free. The dramatic critic of the Academy for November 30, 1912, gives a detailed criticism of the play. "The Younger Generation fits in with the present reversion of taste to the candid domestic style of play, it clearly and admirably sets forth such simple story as it contains, and it is acted with a quiet vigour and sincerity which does immense credit to our stage.--It is all done very smoothly and after a fashion that completely holds the interest. The result is a most engaging comedy in modern manners."³

The same critic in the Academy for June, 1913, passed the following judgment upon the first performance of The Perfect

1. Harper's Weekly, v. 57, p. 126.

2. The Bookman, v. 37, p. 311.

3. Academy, v. 83, p. 703.

Cure. "We have acquired the curious habit of expecting something very good of Mr. Stanley Houghton; so that matters are only following their natural ironic law when we find his new work, The Perfect Cure, completely disappointing. It is all done neatly enough; there is plenty of satire. There is more than enough of sharp sayings about parents of fifty who want to keep their motherless daughters to act as their servants and all that sort of thing. Even if the Crays do exist, is a man of Mr. Houghton's gifts quite fair to us when he lavishes his satiric powers, his cleverness and his sentiment on exceptional types which have survived out of a past period?"¹

The criticisms quoted have been, on the whole, typical of the critical opinion passed on Stanley Houghton's writings. They tend to prove that The Younger Generation and Hindle Wakes are Mr. Houghton's best dramas. Let us glance back over the way we have come and summarize the dramatist's work.

The longer plays, exclusive of Hindle Wakes, are interesting because they demonstrate Houghton's ability to create real characters. They include some remarkably clever portraits, notably, the egotistical Edgar Forsyth in Independent Means, the unscrupulous mother in Marriages in the Making, and the provincially intolerant Kennion family in The Younger Generation. Partners we have dismissed as being merely a part of the playwright's apprenticeship. As for The Perfect Cure, although

1. Ibid., v. 84, p. 819.

technically excellent, it is below the average of the other plays, from the standpoint of realism.

The shorter plays reveal Mr. Houghton's gift of humor. The Old Testament and the New belongs like Partners to Mr. Houghton's apprenticeship. The Master of the House is unusual in its mingling of realistic characterization with a somewhat eerie theme. Fancy Free is unlike the rest of the short plays in its purely "witty" dialogue. Phipps is a farce and therefore contributes little to our knowledge of Houghton's realism. But The Dear Departed is an almost perfect example of the realistic one-act comedy. It is crisp, adequate in plot and characterization, and deserves permanent recognition.

As for Hindle Wakes, it combines the realistic characterization of the longer plays, the solid sense of humor of the shorter plays, with the realistic point of view found in the non-dramatic writings. Therefore this play is the best of Mr. Houghton's plays because of the combination of these three elements. Here are presentable, as well as real, characters. Here also is that constant shifting from the serious to the humorous so like life itself. Furthermore, here is the somewhat cynical viewpoint of the realist who openly attacks the world's worship of humbug. Therefore Hindle Wakes, together with The Younger Generation and The Dear Departed, may be said to prove Stanley Houghton to be a realist in his treatment of character, in his humor, and in his viewpoint.

By his lamentably early death, Stanley Houghton has left behind him a fascinating problem. Viewing his work from an external point of view, the critic will easily recognize that Hindle Wakes represents the perfection of the playwright's gifts as a realist. On the whole his studies are not so much concerned with ideas as with types. His power of observation was growing deeper and stronger. There is not one of the characters in Hindle Wakes but walked the streets of Manchester. Furthermore it is impossible to believe that Mr. Houghton's gold was all worked out in this play. If he had lived he would have created other plays as lasting as Hindle Wakes. "He might have perpetrated yet other abiding pictures of the life that so vividly appealed to him."¹

1. Spectator, v. 113, p. 694.

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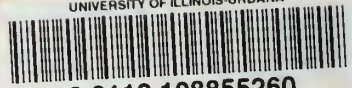
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